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## FISCAL TOPICS

Fiscal Services Division

January 2, 2020



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## Office of State Medical Examiner Budget

The mission of the [Office of the State Medical Examiner](#) (OSME) is to establish credibility in death investigations in a system that will operate efficiently and serve the needs of the citizens of Iowa. The OSME is administered within the Department of Public Health (DPH), and located at the State Laboratories Complex in Ankeny. The core functions of the OSME include:

- Investigating and providing autopsy services for deaths that affect public interest (homicides, suicides, accidents, children, overdose deaths, infectious diseases, other suspicious deaths, etc.).
- Providing expert testimony in criminal proceedings.
- Providing guidance, training, and oversight to county medical examiners.
- Assisting in mass fatality planning and response.

The OSME generally has a staff of 12 full-time equivalent (FTE) positions, plus an additional crew of extra staff who work to maintain the 24/7/365 operations of the office. The OSME currently has four full-time board-certified forensic pathologists, and three full-time medicolegal death investigators. The OSME is accredited by the National Association of Medical Examiners.

### Funding Sources

The OSME operation funding comes from three primary revenue streams:

- General Fund. Funding is included in the Public Protection appropriation to the DPH in the annual Health and Human Services Appropriations bill.
- Death Certificate Fees. Beginning in 2005, of the fee charged for a certified copy of a Death Certificate (\$20 on June 30, 2019, or earlier, and \$15 July 1, 2019, and after), \$3 is credited to the OSME.
- Autopsy Fees. Autopsies performed by the OSME are provided on a fee-for-service basis. Costs of autopsies and related services and expenses are the responsibility of the county where the death occurred. The fee for an autopsy beginning in FY 2019 is \$1,900. This was an increase from \$1,400, which went into effect in FY 2012, and the fee was \$1,200 prior to that. Administrative Rule 641—126.3 specifies that these fees are collected as repayment receipts under Iowa Code section [8.2](#).

### Budget Reports

Because the fees are considered repayment receipts for services performed, they carry forward at the end of the fiscal year. The following table presents the budget report for the OSME, adjusted for the balance carryforward transactions to differentiate ongoing fee revenue from the carryforward balance. The fees, licenses, and permits line includes both autopsy fees and death certificate fees. But for a frame of reference, death certificate fee revenue received is approximately \$400,000 annually.

General Fund support has averaged approximately 32.5% of the OSME's annual expenditures from FY 2010 to FY 2013. However, this amount has decreased over time and for FY 2019, General Fund support accounted for 28.9% of the budget. Information on staffing level data and expenditures is included in the following table.

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### More Information

History of the Office of the State Medical

Examiner: [iosme.iowa.gov/sites/default/files/documents/2015/09/history\\_of\\_the\\_iosme\\_0.pdf](https://iosme.iowa.gov/sites/default/files/documents/2015/09/history_of_the_iosme_0.pdf)

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### Office of the State Medical Examiner Budget Report

	FY 2016	FY 2017	FY 2018	FY 2019	Estimated FY 2020
Beginning Balance	\$ 557,030	\$ 424,831	\$ 465,325	\$ 311,488	\$ 535,255
General Fund	\$ 822,084	\$ 822,084	\$ 822,084	\$ 822,084	\$ 814,769
Receipts from Other Entities	27,770	53,504	21,763	14,626	2,000
Fees, Licenses & Permits	1,507,697	1,616,320	1,589,053	1,965,004	1,448,745
Refunds & Reimbursements	272,352	253,998	315,361	261,225	360,000
Miscellaneous	2,000	5,500	2,750	3,500	2,500
Annual Revenues	<b>\$ 2,631,903</b>	<b>\$ 2,751,406</b>	<b>\$ 2,751,011</b>	<b>\$ 3,066,439</b>	<b>\$ 2,628,014</b>
<b>Total Resources</b>	<b>\$ 3,188,932</b>	<b>\$ 3,176,236</b>	<b>\$ 3,216,336</b>	<b>\$ 3,377,926</b>	<b>\$ 3,163,269</b>
Personal Services	\$ 2,054,388	\$ 2,019,968	\$ 2,082,208	\$ 2,080,629	\$ 2,159,049
Travel & Subsistence	15,042	16,110	13,545	24,994	21,000
Supplies & Materials	89,362	78,781	92,605	95,476	97,600
Contractual Services and Transfers	586,513	527,330	682,491	606,321	825,285
Equipment & Repairs	16,794	27,930	26,983	33,214	48,801
Claims & Miscellaneous	2,000	0	7,000	2,000	11,434
Licenses, Permits, Refunds & Other	3	6	18	39	100
Total Expenses	<b>\$ 2,764,102</b>	<b>\$ 2,670,124</b>	<b>\$ 2,904,848</b>	<b>\$ 2,842,672</b>	<b>\$ 3,163,269</b>
<b>Ending Balance</b>	<b>\$ 424,831</b>	<b>\$ 506,112</b>	<b>\$ 311,488</b>	<b>\$ 535,255</b>	<b>\$ 0</b>
Ending Balance as percent of expenditures.	15.4%	19.0%	10.7%	18.8%	0.0%
Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) Positions	11.9	11.0	10.9	10.9	14.0
Part-Time Extra Help FTE Positions	7.0	7.6	7.4	6.7	TBD
<b>Total FTEs</b>	<b>18.9</b>	<b>18.6</b>	<b>18.3</b>	<b>17.6</b>	<b>14.0</b>

TBD = To be determined

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